

REMARKS

The Examiner has kindly indicated that claims 2 to 8 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected claim but allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, an amended claim 1 is presented for consideration which incorporate the features of claim 2 (now canceled). The dependency of claim 3 is amended accordingly.

It is submitted that claims 9 to 14 which are dependent on claim 1 either directly or indirectly, also likewise allowable.

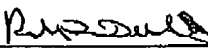
The applicant is also presenting a new claim (set) 20 to 33 for consideration which corresponds to claims 1 to 14 as originally filed in which claim 20 includes a definition for a start-up operation of a continuous caster which distinguishes the invention from the cited prior art of Vaculik et al without introducing a minimum casting speed of at least 0.1 meter/second, the feature of claim 2 now included in amended claim 1.

Applicant submits that such a specific limitation is not necessary and claim 20 provides for "a start-up operation of a continuous caster which begins with pouring liquid steel into an empty mould and ends when a cast length of strand product reaches a predetermined length".

Applicant notes that support for this definition will be found in the description at paragraphs [006], [014], and [043] and that no new matter is being added to the application.

Favourable consideration of the application, and its allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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